

What is claimed is:

1.-15. (Previously Cancelled)

16. (Amended) A combination sandwich press and grill device having a lower housing with a lower cooking surface and an upper housing with an upper cooking surface wherein:

the lower housing being interconnected to the upper housing by a hinge located about a rear of the lower housing;

the upper housing having a closed orientation, a fully open orientation and a locked intermediate orientation;

the upper housing being positionable from the locked intermediate orientation only upon activation of a hinge locking mechanism that is carried by the hinge;

the lower housing receives a removable full length drip tray that collects drippings from both the lower cooking surface and the upper cooking surface when the device is in a the fully open orientation; and wherein

the drip tray is removable from the lower housing by sliding it out a front of the lower housing.

17. (Previously Amended) The device of claim 16, wherein:

the upper cooking surface has a discharge spout formed in a rim of the upper cooking surface, the discharge leading into the drip tray when the device is in a fully open orientation.

18. (Previously Amended) The device of claim 17, wherein:

the drip tray extends from a rear of the lower housing.

19. (Previously Amended) The device of claim 18, wherein:

the drip tray extends from a front of the lower housing and the lower cooking surface has a discharge that leads into that portion of the drip tray that extends from the front of the lower housing.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Amended) The device of claim ~~20~~ 16, wherein:

a mechanism limits the range of motion of a lower edge of the upper cooking surface when the upper housing is in the fully open orientation.

23. (Previously Amended) The device of claim 16, wherein:

the upper housing is carried by a "U" shaped frame having a transverse handle and the handle serves as a foot when the upper housing is in the fully open orientation.

24. (Amended) The device of claim ~~20~~ 16, wherein:

the hinge locking mechanism further comprises a lock barrel having a central opening into which extends a lock shaft;

the lock shaft being rotatable, by a user, from a locked to an unlocked position;

the lock shaft supporting a spring biased cam pin and a spring biased reset pin;

the barrel supporting a pivoting toggle, the toggle having a head and a tail;

the cam pin impinging on the head of the toggle when the lock shaft is in the locked position and on the tail of the toggle when the lock shaft is in the unlocked position.

25. The device of claim 24, wherein:

the lock barrel is carried by a lock barrel retainer formed in a corner of a cooking surface.

26. The device of claim 24, wherein:

a facia is attached to the lock barrel; and

a control knob is coupled to the lock shaft through the facia and lock barrel.

27. (Amended) The device of claim 16, wherein:

the lower cooking surface is tilt adjustable relative to the lower housing and controlled by an actuator located on the exterior of the lower housing.

28. The device of claim 16, wherein:

the lower cooking surface temperature is controlled by a variable thermostat and an upper cooking surface temperature is controlled by a fixed thermostat.

29. The device of claim 28, wherein:

the variable thermostat is controlled by an actuator located on an exterior of the lower housing, the lower cooking surface being tilt adjustable.

30. The device of claim 16, wherein:

the upper cooking surface has ribs.

31. (New) The device of claim 16, wherein the hinge locking mechanism enables hinged rotation of the frame to be automatically arrested in an intermediate orientation between the fully closed and fully open grill orientations.

32. (New) The device of claim 31, wherein the fully open grill orientation is achieved by manually deactivating the locking mechanism.

33. (New) The device according to claim 16, wherein the upper housing being pivotally carried by a "U" shaped frame for hingedly interconnecting the upper housing to the lower housing.

34. (New) The device according to claim 33, wherein the upper cooking surface while otherwise free to pivot in the frame is restrained from pivoting when it is in the fully open and horizontal orientation.

35. (New) The device of claim 16, wherein the drip tray protrudes from a rear of the lower housing for collects drippings from the upper cooking surface when the device is in the fully open orientation.